2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

1938, 1939, and 1940. The group of older men, who wanted a record of their old way of life taken down, emphasized the religious aspects of their culture. The Boy gave the largest portion of information on this subject. He is now about eighty years old and had been interested ever since he was a young boy in the native culture of his people. His father, Lame Bull, was a deeply religious man and had been a Keeper of the Flat Pipe. From him and from other old men The Boy acquired an enormous body of knowledge which his excellent memory retains. Thick, who died in 1951, and (John) Charles Buckman, who died in 1949, were contemporaries of The Boy and made substantial contributions to the record. Among still older men than these three were Stiffarm, Iron Man I, Joe Assiniboine, Turn Toes, Jim and Philip Shortman, all of whom gave additional information. Charles Buckman spoke English well and sometimes acted as interpreter for the others. Tom Main, a younger man, was, however, the chief interpreter for the men. Moreover, both he and Al Chandler were able to independently contribute valuable information. Biographical details on the chief informants are appended to the present volume.

With all of these men, Dr. Cooper was on excellent terms. They have told me that they realized from their first meeting with him that Dr. Cooper, being a man of deep religious conviction himself, would understand what they could tell him of Gros Ventre beliefs as they had been taught to them or to their fathers before Catholicism had any hold upon the Gros Ventres. The friendship which developed between Dr. Cooper on the one hand and Thick, Charles Buckman, Tom Main, and above all, The Boy, on the other, was a lasting one founded on the deepest mutual respect.

Dr. Cooper usually had the men come to his quarters at the priest's residence of the Mission for regularly scheduled sessions, especially in 1940 when he was able to take phonograph records of over a hundred Gros Ventre songs. The Boy, who accepted me as a substitute for Dr. Cooper in the years when the latter was unable, on account of ill health, to get out to Montana, remarked on a difference in our methods. Dr. Cooper tended to guide the interviews more closely than I and, since we both had the habit of recording the questions we asked, our field notes confirm The Boy's observation. Inasmuch as those who were engaged in making the record were detained from attending to their other duties, Dr.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the discussion when some problem arose or additional information was needed.

The material as presented in Part I, Social Life, is somewhat uneven due in some measure at least to the coincidence of age and sex differences in our chief informants. The two women,—Coming Daylight and Singer,—who gave the bulk of the material on the life cycle, on kinship behavior and on economic activities, came of a generation earlier than that of The Boy, Thick and Charles Buckman who supplied most of the information on political structure and war. The old women were able to draw on their personal experiences of Gros Ventre life as it was lived before the buffalo disappeared. They themselves had been child-brides, had lived in polygynous households, had worked innumerable buffalo skins, and so on. The men, however, had not yet attained adult status when the most radical change was inaugurated in their culture and thus were denied participation in the former type of culture to the same degree as that enjoyed by the women. Men and women alike, nevertheless, were careful to separate what they knew at first hand from what they had been told. Further, they indicated from whom they had acquired information, and the men especially estimated as accurately as they could to what decade a given event which they were describing might be attributed.

Although a considerable amount of linguistic data was gathered and drawn upon, all but a few of the native words have been eliminated from Part I. We hope to present the linguistic material in the future when it may be possible to publish as Part III a transcription of music and texts of the songs which we have recorded. The phonograph records of the 130 Gros Ventre songs are on deposit in the Department of Anthropology of The Catholic University of America, along with the musical notation of songs nos. 1–10, 12–15, 17–19, 23–24, which have very kindly been transcribed by Mrs. Marianne Arden. Songs nos. 24, 34, 37, 42, 43, 65, 89, 91, and 130, have been transcribed and analyzed by Mr. Jack Kilpatrick under the title, The Possible Relationship of Content to Form in Certain Gros Ventres Songs, a dissertation for the degree Master of Music, July 1946, manuscript copies of which are on deposit at the Library of The Catholic University of America.

[p. xiv is blank]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

This last prayer was said while World War II was still in progress. After it was over and the Gros Ventre young men had returned from service in the armed forces, a very solemn ritual opening of the Flat Pipe was held, on February 6, 1946,—at which unfortunately neither of us could be present. The School Sisters of St. Francis, however, who teach the elementary and secondary grades at the Mission of St. Paul, Hays, were present and took careful notes of the proceedings which they afterwards wrote up and hectographed. Early in the rite, before actually opening the Flat Pipe bundle, The Boy, who had charge of the ceremony, held up a pipe and prayed in Gros Ventre as follows, the prayer being translated for the Sisters by Thomas Main and being preceded by a brief explanatory word by The Boy:

"I will now speak in the first person and give you a prayer [such as] our Gros Ventre forefathers prayed in times of distress to the Turtle who reposes in this [Flat Pipe] bundle and to the Maker of the earth:

"Supreme Being, look down upon me, a poor mortal person, as I pray to You, and appeal to You, in this time of great distress and disturbance among your children, the peoples of this earth.

"I pray to You, a poor and lowly Indian, in the spirit and way that my ancestors prayed to You. I ask that the fires of hatred subside among all men, and that they may now love one another and understand that they are all brothers and must share the handiwork of Your hand, creation, the universe, and all nature. I ask that You may inspire the representatives of the peoples of the earth who are now engaged in a most difficult task, the framing of the terms of peace, so that it may be just and lasting.

"Supreme Being, I asked You to watch over and take care of my grandchildren, the young men of the Indian people, as they went off to all the corners of the earth to fight in the greatest war and conflict of all time for the cause of freedom and liberty, and now that they are back safe to those near and dear to them I feel that You have listened to and granted my prayer. Now, My Father, I ask you again to give to my grandchildren, the veterans of the great war just ended, peace of mind, happiness, good health, and a long life. And that they enjoy the soil of their birth and the land